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Letter from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting a copy of a report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, submitting an estimate of appropriation required to supply a deficiency in the appropriation for the relief of the Navajo Indians now at or near Fort Sumner, for the year ending June 30, 1868.

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LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING

A copy of a report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, submitting an estimate of appropriation required to supply a deficiency in the appropriation for the relief of the Navajo Indians now at or near Fort Sumner, for the year ending June 30, 1868.

JULY 13, 1867.—Read and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, D. C., July 13, 1867.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit to the Senate herewith a copy of a report of the 10th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, submitting an "Estimate of appropriation required to supply a deficiency in the appropriation for the relief of the Navajo Indians now at or near Fort Sumner, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1868," to which the favorable consideration of Congress is respectfully invited. The amount asked for is \$304,320.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. T. OTTO,
Acting Secretary.

HON. BENJAMIN F. WADE,
President United States Senate.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., July 10, 1867.

SIR: Referring to office reports of the 25th of May last and 28th ultimo, relative to the Navajo Indians on the Bosque Redondo reservation in New Mexico, about to be transferred to this department, and to your response to the letter, approving my action in regard to feeding these Indians under the contract submitted with said report of the 28th, I would respectfully say that, in view of all the circumstances connected with this case, and the fact that the sum appropriated by the last Congress is not sufficient to purchase subsistence to feed the said Indians for a longer time than three months, I deem it of the utmost importance that the attention of Congress be invited to the matter at its present session, in order that the necessary steps may be taken to have the Indians in question taken care of after the \$100,000 appropriated by the last Congress has been expended.

As stated in office report of the 25th of May last, the cost to the government for feeding these Indians under the management of the War Department has amounted to not far from \$1,500,000 annually, including the first cost of the subsistence and the transportation of the same to the reservation. Taking the first cost of the subsistence furnished by the War Department as a basis, and the cost to the government for each ration furnished to the Indians on said reservation has been from twenty-four to twenty-nine cents. The contract with Mr. Simerly stipulates that rations of beef, flour, and salt shall be furnished at a cost of nineteen cents each; this would make a difference of at least five cents on each ration in favor of the present arrangement, without taking into consideration the cost of transportation under the War Department, and taking as a basis the whole number of Indians to be fed to be 7,000, the difference for a full year would be \$127,750.

Assuming that there will be 7,000 of these Indians to be subsisted and cared for the present fiscal year, and that the department commences to feed them on the 1st of September next, and continues to feed them to the end of the present fiscal year, at a cost of 19 cents per ration, as under the contract with Mr. Simerly, it will cost the government \$404,320. The sum of \$100,000 has been appropriated for the purpose, but, as will be seen, this sum is totally inadequate for the purpose, and it will require at least a further sum of \$304,320 to feed and properly care for said Indians during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1868.

This matter has been brought to the notice of the department and of Congress so often that I do not consider it necessary or advisable, at the present time, to make a lengthy report on the subject. The fact that, in order to keep these Indians on the reservation, and thus prevent them from scattering through the whole territory to rob and steal for an existence, they must be fed and provided for until such time as they are able to subsist themselves by their farming operations, must be apparent to all; and I am of the opinion that if the attention of Congress be again invited to the matter, such steps will be taken for the care of said Indians as, in its wisdom, may be considered just and proper.

I therefore submit herewith an estimate for \$304,320 to supply a deficiency in the appropriation made by the 39th Congress for the relief of the Navajo Indians, now at or near Fort Sumner, and respectfully request that the same, with such favorable recommendation as you may deem proper, be transmitted to the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives for the action of Congress.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. G. TAYLOR, *Commissioner.*

Hon. W. T. OTTO,

Acting Secretary of the Interior.

Estimate of appropriation required to supply a deficiency in the appropriation for the relief of the Navajo Indians now at or near Fort Sumner for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1868.

For this amount, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to supply a deficiency in the appropriation for the relief of the Navajo Indians now at or near Fort Sumner, in New Mexico, to be expended under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1867, \$304,320.